



## NEBRASKA REPORT

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UNITED STATES SENATOR • NEBRASKA

### **Celebrating the 225<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the U.S. Army June 16, 2000**

“Our cause is noble, it is the cause of mankind!” wrote then-General George Washington in a letter to a friend in 1779. Just four years before, the Army he commanded was created as an essential prelude to the birth of the United States of America.

In 1775, about 1,200 volunteers comprised the first organized American army to engage the British Redcoats during the Battle of Bunker Hill. The Americans fought off a highly trained British Army which launched a calculated, three-pronged attack on their hastily assembled fortifications. The Americans’ defense was so determined that the general in charge of the British troops was forced to resort to desperate tactics and suffered high casualties before finally gaining the hill. Although the Americans contested every inch of ground, they had to concede the battle when they ran out of ammunition. This resolute group of farmers and merchants who would later be known as the United States Army fought valiantly in their first battle for freedom.

For 225 years, the “noble cause” referred to by General Washington has inspired the men and women of the Army to perform selfless acts of bravery and uncommon valor. My brother Tom and I served in the Army in Vietnam with some of the bravest men we’ve ever known or will ever know.

The history of the Army is woven together with men and women who – like George Washington – served in its ranks and went on to serve their country in other ways as great civilian leaders and statesmen. Men like former World War I artillery officer, Captain Harry S. Truman, who later became the American President who did the most to shape the post World War II world. And men like General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who led the Allies to victory in Europe during World War II and went on to become one of the most respected and effective American presidents in history. Or former Army Ranger Senator Bob Dole, who suffered very severe injuries in World War II and went on to become one of the longest serving Senate Majority and Minority Leaders in the history of Congress. He established himself as a senator who would not give way on his deeply held principles, yet was a man who knew the art of diplomacy. Women like Colonel Julia Stimson, who served with extraordinary bravery and distinction in the European theater during World War I with the American Expeditionary Forces and as Superintendent of

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the Army Nurse Corps. Colonel Stimson went on to become President of the American Nurses’ Association until she rejoined the Army in World War II to publicize the need for

nurses in the Armed Services. Men like Senator Max Cleland, who lost both legs and an arm in Vietnam, but did not become embittered by his fate and went on to serve in the Georgia State Senate, as head of the U.S. Veterans Administration, and in the United States Senate.

“Duty, Honor, Country.” The motto of the U.S. Army molded these men and women into extraordinary leaders. But the Army has produced many quiet heroes who served their country bravely and honorably. These heroes became leaders by example. They came home from their service in the Army and worked hard, raised families, became coaches and community leaders. Always giving of themselves and never asking for anything in return. Sometimes the men and women of the Army did not come home from serving their country. They are the fallen heroes whose memories will never be forgotten and whose memories continue to inspire us in our daily lives.

The Army officially celebrated its birthday on June 14. During this 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, we should remember and recognize how the Army defined a nation, helped preserve freedom and helped build a more secure and prosperous world. I am proud to be an Army infantryman. Hoo-ha!

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